CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1. A method of managing business data comprising:

2   gathering product information of at least one product from a plurality of

3   establishments, the product information including a plurality of core traits from the at

4   least one product described by the at least one establishment's brand-specific attributes;

5   extracting the core traits from the at least one product's product information;

6   removing the brand-specific attributes from the core traits; and

7   creating a database including generic core product information from the core

8   traits.

1   2. The method of claim 1, wherein generic core product information includes

2   information that is utilized by a plurality of establishments as a parameter of the product.

1   3. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing the core product

2   information in the database.

1   4. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing access to the core

2   product information regardless of the product information's origin.

1   5. The method of claim 1, wherein the core traits include at least one trait

2   selected from physical characteristics, reliability specifications, durability ratings,

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3   availability status, price, shipping information, warranty coverage, consumer reviews,

4   and technical specifications.

1   6.   The method of claim 1, wherein the core product information is

2   displayable in a user template.

1   7.   The method of claim 1, wherein the establishments are selected from

2   manufacturing establishments, service establishments, retail establishments, channel

3   partners and wholesale establishments.

1   8.   The method of claim 1, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema making the product information's structure generic.

1   9.   The method of claim 8, wherein the at least one schema enables computer-

2   executable instructions to, when executed in a processing system, cause the processing

3   system to extract the core traits from the product information.

1   10.   The method of claim 1, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema to the product information defining the core traits of the product information.

1   11.   The method of claim 1, wherein extracting includes placing the core traits

2   into categories.

1   12.   The method of claim 1, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema to the product information.

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1   13.   The method of claim 12, wherein the at least one schema identifies the

2   core traits of the product information.

1   14.   The method of claim 12, wherein the at least one schema removes non-

2   core attributes from the product information.

1   15.   The method of claim 1, wherein extracting includes at least one schema

2   that can be applied successively to the product information creating several layers of core

3   product information.

1   16.   The method of claim 1, wherein extracting includes grouping the core

2   traits according to different schema.

1   17.   The method of claim 10, wherein allowing includes placing the core

2   product information in a user template, the at least one schema identifying the location in

3   the template where the core product information is placed.

1   18.   The method of claim 1 wherein the schema are hierarchical identifying

2   several different levels of detail of core attributes in each layer.

1   19.   The method of claim 1 wherein extracting can occur repetitively to create

2   several layers of core attributes.

1   20.   The method of claim 1, wherein storing includes using a computer

2   readable software language.

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1   21.   The method of claim 1, wherein storing includes using extended markup

2   language "(XML").

1   22.   A method of managing business information comprising:

2   gathering source specific information from at least one source;

3   extracting from the source specific product information a plurality of core traits of

4   the source specific product information by applying at least one schema, wherein the at

5   least one schema identifies the core traits of the source specific product information,

6   removing any unrecognized parameters in the source specific product information, and

7   structuring the core traits into categories ;

8   creating a database including generic core product information from the core

9   traits; and

10   disseminating the core traits by applying the at least one schema to a user

11   template.

1   23.   The method of claim 22, wherein the core traits include at least one trait

2   selected from physical characteristics, reliability specifications, durability ratings,

3   availability status, price, shipping information, warranty coverage, consumer reviews and

4   technical specifications.

1   24.   The method of claim 22, wherein the core product information is placed in

2   a user template.

1   25.   The method of claim 22, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema identifying generic core product information.

1   26.   The method of claim 25, wherein the at least one schema enables

2   computer-executable instructions to, when executed in a processing system, cause the

3   processing system to extract the core traits from the product information.

1   27.   The method of claim 22, wherein generic core product information

2   includes information used by a plurality of establishments as parameters of a product.

1   28.   The method of claim 22, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema to the product information defining the core traits of the product information.

1   29.   The method of claim 22, wherein extracting includes at least one schema

2   that can be applied successively to the product information creating several layers of core

3   product information.

1   30.   The method of claim 22, wherein extracting includes grouping the core

2   traits according to different schema. .

1   31.   The method of claim 22, wherein allowing includes placing the core

2   product information in a user template, the at least one schema identifying the location in

3   the template where the core product information is placed. .

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1   32.   A method of disseminating product information comprising;

2   extracting core traits from product information gained from a plurality of product

3 information sources;

4   storing the core traits in a generic extended markup language ("XML") database;

5   applying at least one schema to a user product template such that the at least one

6 schema identifies core attribute requests; and

7   correlating the core attribute requests with core traits stored in the generic XML

8 database. .

1   33.   The method of claim 32, further comprising placing the requested core

2 traits into the user product template. .

1   34.   The method of claim 32, further comprising delivering the user product

2 template with the requested core traits by a plurality of output mediums. .

1   35.   The method of claim 32, wherein the core traits include at least one trait

2 selected from physical characteristics, reliability specifications, durability ratings,

3 availability status, price, shipping information, warranty coverage, consumer reviews and

4 technical specifications. .

1   36.   The method of claim 32, wherein sources include at least one source

2 selected from manufacturing establishments, service establishments, retail

3 establishments, channel partners and wholesale establishments. .

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1   37.   The method of claim 32, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema identifying generic core product information. .

1   38.   The method of claim 32, wherein the generic core product information

2   includes information utilized by a plurality of establishments as a parameter of the

3   product. .

1   39.   The method of claim 32, wherein the at least one schema enables

2   computer-executable instructions to, when executed in a processing system, cause the

3   processing system to extract the core traits from the product information. .

1   40.   The method of claim 32, wherein extracting includes applying the at least

2   one schema to the product information defining the core traits of the product information.

1   41.   The method of claim 32, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema to the product information. .

1   42.   The method of claim 32, wherein the at least one schema removes non-

2   core traits of the product information. .

1   43.   The method of claim 32, wherein the at least one schema identifies the core

2   traits of the product information by removing any brand specific attributes in the product

3   information.

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1   44.   The method of claim 32, wherein extracting includes at least one schema

2   that can be applied successively to the product information creating several layers of

3   core product information.

1   45.   The method of claim 32, wherein extracting includes grouping the core

2   traits according to different schema. .

1   46.   The method of claim 32, wherein placing includes the at least one schema

2   identifying the location in the template where the core traits are placed.

1   47.   A method of tracking the use of business information comprising:

2   extracting from the source specific product information core traits of the product

3   information gained from a plurality of sources by applying at least one schema;

4   creating a database including generic core traits;

5   disseminating the core traits by placing the core traits into a user template

6   according to the at least one schema; and

7   recording the incidence of requests for traits regardless of the sources of the

8   information.

1   48.   The method of claim 47, further comprising correlating the incidence of

2   requests for core traits with specific sources.

1   49.   The method of claim 47, wherein generic core traits includes information

2   that is utilized by a plurality of establishments as a parameter of the product.

1   50.   The method of claim 47, further comprising storing the core traits in the

2   database.

1   51.   The method of claim 47, further comprising providing access to the core

2   traits regardless of the product information's origin.

1   52.   The method of claim 47, wherein the core traits include at least one trait

2   selected from physical characteristics, reliability specifications, durability ratings,

3   availability status, price, shipping information, warranty coverage, consumer reviews,

4   and technical specifications.

1   53.   The method of claim 47, wherein the core product information is

2   displayable in a user template.

1   54.   The method of claim 47, wherein the sources are selected from

2   manufacturing establishments, service establishments, retail establishments, channel

3   partners and wholesale establishments.

1   55.   The method of claim 47, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema making the core trait structure generic.

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1   56.   The method of claim 55, wherein the at least one schema enables computer-

2   executable instructions to, when executed in a processing system, cause the processing

3   system to extract the core traits from the product information.

1   57.   The method of claim 47, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema to the product information defining the core traits of the product information.

1   58.   The method of claim 47, wherein extracting includes placing the core traits

2   into categories.

1   59.   The method of claim 47, wherein extracting includes applying at least one

2   schema to the product information.

1   60.   The method of claim 59, wherein the at least one schema identifies the core

2   traits of the product information.

1   61.   The method of claim 59, wherein the at least one schema removes non-core

2   attributes from the product information.

1   62.   The method of claim 47, wherein extracting includes at least one schema

2   that can be applied successively to the product information creating several layers of core

3   trait information.

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1   63.   The method of claim 47, wherein extracting includes grouping the core

2   traits according to different schema.

1   64.   The method of claim 47, wherein disseminating includes the at least one

2   schema identifying the location in the template where the core product information is

3   placed.

1   65.   The method of claim 47, wherein the schema are hierarchical identifying

2   several different levels of detail of core attributes in each layer.

1   66.   The method of claim 47, wherein extracting can occur repetitively to create

2   several layers of core attributes.

1   67.   The method of claim 50, wherein storing includes using a computer

2   readable software language.

1   68.   The method of claim 50, wherein storing includes using extended markup

2   language "(XML")".

1   69.   A computer readable medium containing executable instructions which,

2   when executed in a processing system, causes the system to:

3   gather product information from a plurality of establishments, the product

4   information using the establishment's brand-specific attributes to describe a product's

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5   core traits;

6   extract the core traits from the product information by applying at least one schema

7   wherein the at least one schema identifies the core traits of the source specific product

8   information, removes any inconsistencies in the product information, and structures the

9   core traits into categories ;

10   creates a consistent generic Extended Markup Language ("XML") database of core

11   traits; and

12   provides access to the core product information.

1   70.   A system for managing business information in a computer network

2   comprising:

3   at least one client processor operating a client browser coupled among at least one

4   server system and a generic consistent database, wherein the server system gathers

5   business data from a plurality of sources and wherein the database resides independent of

6   the server system or the client processors;

7   at least one schema, wherein the at least one schema identifies the core information

8   from the business data and stores the core information extracted from the business data in

9   Extended Markup Language ("XML") in the generic consistent database; and

10   output templates, wherein the output templates identify core information based on

11   the at least one schema to be accessed from the generic consistent database and

12   disseminated by a plurality of mediums.

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1   71.   The system of claim 70, wherein the generic consistent database resides

2   within the server system.

1   72.   A method of managing product information comprising:

2   compiling a plurality of product information from at least one product center;

3   forming at least one schema that identifies at least one core attribute of the product

4   information;

5   applying the at least one schema to the product information to extract the at least

6   one core attribute;

7   converting the at least one core attribute into Extended Markup Language,

8   ("XML");

9   storing the at least one core attribute in an XML database;

10   publishing the schema; and

11   displaying the at least one core attribute at a user interface to access and edit.

1   73.   The method of claim 72, wherein the schema are hierarchical identifying

2   several different levels of detail of core attributes in each layer.

1   74.   The method of claim 72, wherein applying can occur repetitively to create

2   several layers of core attributes.

1   75.   The method of claim 72, wherein the core attribute is generic.

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1   76.   The method of claim 72, wherein the core attribute information includes

2   information that is utilized by a plurality of establishments as a parameter of the product.

1   77.   The method of claim 1, further comprising providing access to the at least

2   one core attribute of the product information regardless of the product information's

3   origin.

1   78.   The method of claim 72, wherein the at least core attribute includes at least

2   one attribute selected from physical characteristics, reliability specifications, durability

3   ratings, availability status, price, shipping information, warranty coverage, consumer

4   reviews, and technical specifications.

1   79.   The method of claim 72, wherein displaying includes placing a core

2   attribute in a user template.

1   80.   The method of claim 72, wherein the at least one product center is selected

2   from marketing, service, research and development, manufacturing, operations, sales,

3   financial, and administration.

1   81.   The method of claim 72, wherein applying includes making the core

2   attribute's structure generic.

1   82.   The method of claim 72, wherein the at least one schema enables computer-

2   executable instructions to, when executed in a processing system, cause the processing

3   system to extract the at least one core attribute from the product information.

1   83.   The method of claim 72, wherein extracting includes placing the at least one

2   core attribute into categories.

1   84.   The method of claim 72, wherein the at least one schema removes non-core

2   attributes from the product information.

1   85.   The method of claim 72, wherein applying includes applying the at least

2   one schema successively to the product information creating several layers of core

3   attributes.

1   86.   The method of claim 72, wherein applying includes grouping the core traits

2   according to different schema.

1   87.   The method of claim 72, further comprising placing the at least one core

2   attribute in a user template, the at least one schema identifying the location in the

3   template where the at least one core attribute is placed.

1   88.   The method of claim 72, wherein the at least one schema hierarchically

2   identifies several different levels of detail of core attributes in each layer.

1   89.   The method of claim 72, wherein applying can occur repetitively to create

2   several layers of core attributes.

1   90.   The method of claim 72, wherein storing includes using a computer

2   readable software language.

1   91.   A computer readable medium for compiling and disseminating business

2   information containing executable instructions which, when executed in a processing

3   system, cause the system to:

4   gather product information from a plurality of sources;

5   extract at least one core trait from the product information;

6   form at least one generic core trait by removing brand specific attributes from the at

7   least one core trait;

8   create a database which stores the at least one generic core trait;

9   place the at least one core trait into a user template;

10   disseminate the at least one core trait on the user template through a plurality of

11   mediums; and

12   track which at least one core trait is placed into the user template.

1   92.   A computer readable medium containing executable instructions which,

2   when executed in a processing system, tracks the incidence of examination of product

3   information, comprising:

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4 source specific core traits of the product information extracted from a plurality of

5 sources by applying a schema;

6 a database of generic core product information allowing dissemination of the core

7 product information with a user template;

8 recorded incidence of requests for core product information regardless of the source

9 of the information; and

10 correlated incidence of requests for core product information with specific sources.

1 93. A method for tracking the incidence of product information examination

2 comprising:

3 maintaining a database of generic core attributes compiled from information

4 gained from a plurality of sources wherein the generic core attributes are extracted from

5 the information by at least one application of a schema identifying the core attributes;

6 monitoring a request for the generic core attributes to be placed in a template;

7 recording the incidence of the request for the generic core attributes regardless of

8 the source; and

9 correlating the frequency with which the generic core attributes are requested with

10 the template.

1 94. The method of claim 93, wherein monitoring includes identifying the

2 frequency with which the generic core attributes are requested.

1   95.   The method of claim 93, wherein correlating includes associating the

2   requested generic core attributes with a user.

1   96.   The method of claim 93, wherein generic core attributes includes

2   information that is utilized by the plurality of sources as a parameter of a product.

1   97.   The method of claim 93, further comprising storing the core product

2   information in the database.

1   98.   The method of claim 93, further comprising providing access to the generic

2   core attributes regardless of the generic core attribute's origin.

1   99.   The method of claim 93, wherein the schema defines the core attributes of

2   the information.

1   100.   The method of claim 93, wherein the at schema removes non-core attributes

2   from the information.

1   101.   The method of claim 93, wherein extracting includes the schema being

2   applied successively to the information creating several layers of generic core attributes.

1   102.   The method of claim 93, wherein maintaining includes grouping the generic

2   core attributes according to different schema.

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1   103.   The method of claim 93, wherein correlating includes identifying the

2   location in the template where the generic core attributes are placed.

1   104.   The method of claim 93, wherein the schema are hierarchical identifying

2   several different levels of detail of the generic core attributes.

1   105.   The method of claim 93, wherein maintaining includes using a computer

2   readable software language.

1   106.   The method of claim 93, wherein maintaining includes using extended

2   markup language "(XML")".

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